

Montana Department of Military Affairs
Disaster & Emergency Services Division
State Emergency Coordination Center

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Situation Report for Sunday, July 28, 2003 (issued @ 14:00 hrs.)

Wildfires of 2003

Attention * - New information shown in today's report displayed in ***Bold Italics*** type.

I. - Background Information:

- Fire activity throughout the state continues to generate concern on the part of many Montana citizens and lots of work for local government officials. Better fire and weather conditions including increased humidity, lighter winds, and lower temperatures have contributed to a successful response to this week's wildfires. The lack of available resources early on taxed "initial attack" response around the state. Successful efforts on the part of incident management proved to be fruitful in the Missouri Breaks Complex, Slim Sam, Long Mountain, and Kelsey fires. Demobilization has or is currently taking place at those fire sites. However, fire managers still believe another shift in conditions could easily create a long summer siege (possibly rivaling that of 2000).

II. - Current Montana Fire Conditions: (as reported to NRCC ***July 27, 2003 (2230)***)

NORTHERN ROCKIES DAILY SUMMARY

Date: July 27, 2003 (2300)

Northern Rockies Preparedness Level = 5

National Preparedness Level = 5

Light initial attack – 27 new fires for 1,411 acres

- ***Flathead Area Command (Mann) has been ordered to manage large fires on the Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Forest.***
 - ***Wedge Canyon – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Bennett), 18,850 acres, 5% contained, 20 miles E of Eureka, Montana.***
 - ***Robert – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Stam), 9,310 acres, 0% contained, 8 miles N of Columbia Falls, Montana.***
 - ***Trapper Creek Complex – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Raley) transitioning with Fire Use Team (Cook), 16,500 acres, 35% contained, This Complex is made up the Trapper Creek (14,600 acres – 25% contained), Paul Bunyan (300 acres – 100% contained) and Wolf Gun***

(1,600 acres – 35% contained) fires located 45 statute miles NE of Kalispell, MT.

- *Little Salmon Creek Complex – This 250 acre, 0% contained, Wildland Fire Use complex is located 47 miles SE of Kalispell, Montana in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. This complex, made up of the Pagoda (100 acres) and the Little Salmon (150 acres), is being managed to accomplish resource objectives. A Fire Use Management Team has been ordered.*
- *Black Frog Complex - Type 1 Incident Management Team (Frye), 7,938 acres, 25% contained. This Complex is made up of the Blackwall fire (4,966 acres), located 32 miles N of Salmon, Idaho and Frog Pond (2,972 acres), located 34 miles S of Hamilton, Montana.*
- *Ross Creek – 142 acres, 35% contained, 20 air miles SW of Troy, Montana.*
- *Hidden Lake – Type 2 Incident Management Team (Chrisman), 3,500 acres, 35% contained, 30 miles W of Dillon, Montana.*
- *Big Creek – Type 2 Incident Management Team (Swope), 1,339 acres, 80% contained, 4 miles NW of Victor, Montana.*

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE GREAT FALLS MT
400 AM MDT MON JUL 28 2003**

WEST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE-

Today - Sunny. Highs 89 to 99.

Tonight - Clear. Lows 49 to 59.

Tuesday - sunny. Highs 87 to 97.

CENTRAL MONTANA-

Today - Sunny. Highs in the mid 80s to mid 90s.

Tonight - Clear becoming partly cloudy after midnight. Lows 50 to 60.

Tuesday - partly cloudy in the morning then clearing. Highs in the 80s but in the lower to mid 90s in the Helena valley.

SOUTHWEST MONTANA-

*Today - Mostly sunny. Highs in the lower to mid 90s but in the 80s
In the mountains.*

*Tonight - Mostly clear. Lows 50 to 60 but in the 40s in the higher
Valleys.*

Tuesday - mostly sunny. Highs 85 to 95 but 75 to 85 in the Mountains.

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN MONTANA-

*Today - Mostly sunny. Isolated afternoon thunderstorms far Southwest.
 Highs in the 90s.
 Tonight - Partly cloudy...becoming breezy east. Chance of
 Thunderstorms east. Lows in the upper 50s to lower 60s.
 Tuesday - Partly cloudy...breezy east. Isolated morning Thunderstorms
 southeast. Highs in the 80s to lower 90s.*

III. - Summary of Actions being taken by Local Government Officials:

Local government resources from various jurisdictions have been actively engaged in fire fighting efforts, particularly during the past several days. The evacuation of residents whose properties have been threatened have been conducted as required.

| <u>Local Emergency and Disaster Declarations</u> | | <u>Date Filed</u> |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| Cascade County | Emergency Declaration (Box Canyon/Long Mtn.) | 7/15/03 |
| Garfield County | Disaster Declaration (Missouri Breaks) | 7/15/03 |
| Beaverhead County | Emergency Resolution (multiple fires) | 7/17/03 |
| Ravalli County | Emergency Declaration (Big Creek) | 7/20/03 |
| Flathead County | Emergency Declaration (Wedge Canyon) | 7/21/03 |
| Sanders County | Resolution (Level I Fire Restrictions) | 7/17/03 |

IV. - Summary of State Activities and Resources Committed:

State Declaration:

On 7/18/03, Governor Judy Martz signed an Executive Order (# 14-03) in which she declared a statewide emergency thereby enabling mobilization of state resources (including the Montana National Guard) should they be needed to help protect the life, health and/or property of Montana's citizens.

FEMA Declarations:

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration approved on July 23rd, 2003 for Missouri Breaks Complex fire. DNRC is contemplating a request for a FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration for Flathead, Sanders, Lake, and Lincoln Counties.

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration approved on July 25th, 2003 for Flathead County's Wedge Canyon and Roberts fires.

Requests for State Assistance:

- The Montana National Guard is assisting “initial attack” fire suppression operations by supplying 3 UH-60 (Blackhawk) Helicopters modules and approximately 20 people. One helicopter is currently assigned to the Flathead Interagency Dispatch Center, another is assigned to the Helena Interagency Dispatch Center, and the third is assigned to Missoula. ***The Montana National Guard Personnel Resources currently allocated to wild land fire suppression duties stands at 35.***

- One NG Liaison Officer has been assigned to the Northern Rockies Coordination Center (NGCC) in Missoula.

Status of State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC)

- Montana DES is providing support to local governments through the State Emergency Coordination Center in Helena. The SECC is operating at Activation Level III with extended hours (0700-1900 every day).

- The State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC) will continue to monitor conditions and is prepared to provide 24-hour incident support to local governments. After office hours (i.e., 1900-0700) support is available through the DES Duty Officer who may be reached at (406) 841-3911.

Addendums to Situation Report

As of: **July 28th, 2003**

Road Closures: Information is current as of 07/28/03

Southwest

Montana Highway 43 and U.S. 93, closed recently because of the Black Frog fire complex, but reopened at noon on Friday, July 25. ***The roads are now open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily for the foreseeable future, officials said. The River Road will be open with pilot cars on the hour, from Lost Trail Pass to Gibbonsville, Idaho. This section of Highway 93 is closed at night, from 9 p.m. to 9 a.m.*** Forest Service officials have closed the Gibbonsville Road from where it enters the Salmon-Challis National Forest to where it leaves the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. ***Highway 43 is now open 24 hours a day from Lost Trail Pass to Wisdom. The Salmon River Road has now been cleared to allow one lane passage. The Panther Creek Road is impassable near Panther Creek’s confluence with the Salmon River due to landslides.***

Northwest

The Wedge Canyon fire, 6-miles south of the Canadian boarder, and the Robert fire, between Coram and West Glacier, are actively requiring the continued closure of Secondary 486 to all but essential traffic.

Reported Major Fire Activity:

Black Frog Complex:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Residences threatened: 75 | Commercial Property: 1 | Outbuildings/Other: 10 |
| Estimated Cost: \$2,700,000 | % contained: 20% | |

Robert Fire:

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Residences threatened: 100 | Commercial Property: 24 | Outbuildings/Other: 36 |
| Estimated Cost: \$ | % contained: 0 | |

Wedge Canyon:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Residences threatened: 100 | Commercial Property: 0 | Outbuildings/Other: 0 |
| Estimated Cost: \$2,100,000 | % contained: 5% | |

Fire Restrictions and Closures

| <u>Zone</u> | <u>Restrictions</u> | <u>Effective Date</u> |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| <i>Northwestern Zone</i> | <i>Stage II Restrictions</i> | <i>July 28, 2003</i> |
| <i>Southwestern Zone</i> | <i>Stage II Restrictions</i> | <i>July 28, 2003</i> |
| <i>Central Montana Zone</i> | <i>Stage II Restrictions</i> | <i>July 28, 2003</i> |
| <i>South Central Zone</i> | <i>Stage II Restrictions</i> | <i>July 28, 2003</i> |
| <i>Eastern Montana Zone</i> | | |
| | <i><u>Stage I Restrictions</u> (Billings)</i> | <i>July 18, 2003</i> |
| | <i><u>Stage II Restrictions</u></i> | |
| | <i>State & Private: Carbon, Stillwater, Sweet Grass counties</i> | <i>July 25, 2003</i> |
| | <i>Federal: Treasure, Musselshell, Bighorn, Yellowstone</i> | <i>July 18, 2003</i> |
| | <i><u>Stage I Restrictions</u> (Lewistown)</i> | <i>July 21, 2003</i> |
| | <i><u>Stage II Restrictions</u></i> | |
| | <i>State & Private: Liberty County</i> | |
| | <i>Federal: Chouteau, Fergus, Judith Basin, Wheatland</i> | <i>July 25, 2003</i> |
| | <i>Stage I Restrictions (Miles City)</i> | <i>July 26, 2003</i> |

Web Links:

Glacier National Park Fire Management:

<http://www.nps.gov/glac/resources/fires.htm>

Northern Rockies Interagency Information Center

<http://fs.fed.us/r1/fire/2003fires/index.htm>

| |
|----------------------------|
| CENTRAL LAND OFFICE |
|----------------------------|

| | HUMAN | | LIGHTNING | |
|-------------------|--------|--------|-----------|-------|
| | Number | ACRES | Number | ACRES |
| Previous to Date | 19 | 326 | 16 | 18.4 |
| 7/24 - 7/27/03 ** | 3 | 3.35 | 3 | 2.2 |
| Current CLO Total | 22 | 329.35 | 19 | 20.6 |

NORTHWESTERN LAND OFFICE

| | HUMAN | | LIGHTNING | |
|--------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | Number | ACRES | Number | ACRES |
| Previous to Date | 52 | 40.74 | 48 | 30.2 |
| 7/24 - 7/27/03 | 11 | 0.53 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Current NWLO Total | 63 | 41.27 | 48 | 30.2 |

SOUTHWESTERN LAND OFFICE

| | HUMAN | | LIGHTNING | |
|--------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | Number | ACRES | Number | ACRES |
| Previous to Date | 44 | 40.2 | 27 | 7.35 |
| 7/24 - 7/27/03 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Current SWLO Total | 44 | 40.2 | 27 | 7.35 |

EASTERN LAND OFFICE

| | HUMAN | | LIGHTNING | |
|-------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | Number | ACRES | Number | ACRES |
| Previous to Date | 0 | 0 | 3 | 780 |
| 7/24 - 7/27/03 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Current ELO Total | 0 | 0 | 3 | 780 |

NORTHEASTERN LAND OFFICE

| | HUMAN | | LIGHTNING | |
|--------------------|--------|-------|-----------|--------|
| | Number | ACRES | Number | ACRES |
| Previous to Date | 0 | 0 | 3 | 51,619 |
| 7/24 - 7/27/03 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Current NELO Total | 0 | 0 | 3 | 51,619 |

SOUTHERN LAND OFFICE

HUMAN

LIGHTNING

| | Number | ACRES | Number | ACRES |
|-------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| Previous to Date | 2 | 2320 | 0 | 0 |
| 7/24 - 7/27/03 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Current SLO Total | 2 | 2320 | 0 | 0 |

DNRC DIRECT/COUNTY
ASSIST STATEWIDE

| | HUMAN | | LIGHTNING | |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| | Number | ACRES | Number | ACRES |
| Previous to Date | 117 | 2726.94 | 97 | 52,454.95 |
| 7/24 - 7/27/03 | 14 | 3.88 | 3 | 2.20 |
| Current Statewide Total | 131 | 2730.82 | 100 | 52,457.15 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Total Number Human/Lightning Fires To Date | 231 |
| Total Acres Human/Lightning Burned To Date | 55,188.0 |

**** since 7/21/03 - 5 new incidents with no cause or acres reported. Previous six are accounted for in new fires for CLO (3 Human and 3 Lightning)**

GRAND TOTAL OF # OF INCIDENTS (INCLUDING CLO'S 5 INCIDENTS WITH CAUSE UNIDENTIFIED)- 236